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## NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release:  
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### **Divide and Burke County Water Repairs Progressing; Boil Order Still in Effect**

BISMARCK, N.D. – Western Area Water Supply Authority (WAWSA) has informed the North Dakota Department of Health (NDDoH) that repairs are progressing on the broken water line that provides service to Crosby, Noonan, Fortuna and Columbus. The boil order is still in effect, and will not be lifted until tests show the water is safe, which will not be until next Tuesday at the earliest.

According to Jaret Wirtz, Executive Director of WAWSA, the permanent water line was being fused on Thursday, and then will be pulled into place. It was expected to be connected to the main water line by Friday evening or Saturday morning. If the new line maintains pressure, WAWSA personnel will begin flushing water from the new line through the system to the affected communities. Flushing is done to replace the “old” water that is in the system from the temporarily repaired line with “new” water from the new permanent line.

Once the new water arrives at the communities, municipal personnel will flush water through the towns’ systems, again to replace the “old” water with the new. Residents will also be asked to flush water through their homes to replace the “old” water that may still be in their systems with the “new” water. This can be done by flushing toilets and running the taps for three to four minutes, or until the temperature of the water drops. The temperature drop indicates that water from the city lines has gone all the way through the house. Local authorities will let residents know when it is appropriate to flush water through their homes.

Once the new water is in the communities, WAWSA will take samples of the water at locations

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specified by the NDDoH. Officials are hoping to take the samples on Monday. The samples will be tested in Williston in a process that takes 24 hours. Once the results are known, officials will inform residents of their status. If the water does not pass the safety test, additional flushing or other procedures may be necessary before the boil order can be lifted. If the water is safe, residents will be informed that the boil order has been lifted. Assuming the samples are taken Monday, the earliest the boil order would be lifted will be Tuesday.

Divide County Emergency Manager Jody Gunlock indicated the Red Cross has delivered additional bottled water to the county. The county provides the bottled water to the Northwest Ministerial Association churches and the Divide County Food Bank for distribution to the needy and shut-ins. Although the nursing home in Crosby was running short of bottled water, they have now received additional supplies. In Burke County, bottled water is available at the city hall in Columbus.

NDDoH offers the following tips on boiling water:

Bring the water to a rolling boil for at least 1 minute before using it hot (making coffee, etc.), or it cool before use. The taste of boiled water can be improved by pouring it from one container to another and then allowing it to stand for a few hours, or by adding a pinch of salt for each quart or liter of boiled water.

If the water is cloudy

- Filter it through a clean cloth, paper towel, or coffee filter OR allow it to settle
- Draw off the clear water
- Bring the clear water to a rolling boil for one minute
- Let the boiled water cool
- Store the boiled water in clean sanitized containers with tight covers

If the water is clear

- Bring the clear water to a rolling boil for one minute
- Let the boiled water cool
- Store the boiled water in clean sanitized containers with tight covers

### **General Precautions**

- **DISCARD** any ice, juice, formula, stored water and uncooked foods that were prepared with tap water during the period of concern.
- **USE WATER that is safe (bottled or boiled)** for drinking, food preparation, making ice, washing food, manual utensil and equipment washing, rinsing and sanitizing, brushing teeth or any other activity involving the consumption of water. Because of special concerns with infants, baby formula that requires water should be made with only **bottled** water.
- **CHILD CARE CENTERS AND SCHOOLS** should use only **bottled** water for mixing infant formula, and use only safe water for hand washing, and for mixing sanitizing solutions for diapering areas and surfaces such as tabletops and toys. Adult employees should use a hand sanitizer after washing hands with tap water and soap. Do not use drinking fountains and discontinue the use of water play tables.
- **SWIMMING POOLS, HOT TUBS, AND SPAS** that are operated properly, including routine monitoring for adequate disinfection levels, may continue to operate.
- **RESTAURANTS** are strongly encouraged to use single-service disposable dishes and eating utensils, or to follow the washing instructions below.

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**Washing Dishes** - You may use a dishwasher if it has a sanitizing cycle. If it does not have a sanitizing cycle, or you are not sure if it does, you may hand wash dishes and utensils by following these steps:

- Wash the dishes as you normally would.
- As a final step, immerse the dishes for at least one minute in lukewarm water to which a teaspoon of bleach per gallon of water has been added.
- Allow the dishes to completely air dry.
- You may also use boiled and cooled water or bottled water.

**Bathing and Showering** - Young children should be given sponge baths rather than put in a bathtub where they might ingest the tap water. Adults or children should take care not to swallow water when showering.

**Brushing your Teeth** - Use only bottled or boiled water for brushing your teeth.

**Ice** - Ice cubes are not safe unless made with bottled or boiled water. The freezing process does not kill the bacteria or other microorganisms.

**Washing Fruit and Vegetables** - Use only bottled or boiled water to wash fruits and vegetables that are to be eaten raw.

**Hand Washing** - Wash your hands with soap and boiled water, or soap and bottled water. If only tap water is available, it is best to use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer after you wash your hands. If neither is possible and your hands have been exposed to germs, such as after using the bathroom, washing with warm tap water and soap and thoroughly drying your hands is much better than not washing them at all. In these instances, try to keep your hands away from your mouth and use a hand sanitizer as soon as possible after you're done.

**Cooking** - Bring water to a rolling boil for 1 minute before adding food.

**Infants** - Use only bottled water for formula that requires added water, or use only prepared canned baby formula that is not condensed and does not require added water.

**House Pets** - The same precautions taken to protect humans should be applied to pets. Aquatic organisms (e.g. fish) should not be exposed to water containing elevated levels of bacteria. If the organism's water needs to be refreshed use appropriately boiled or bottled water.

For more information on this emergency, residents are urged to monitor social media with hashtag boilorder (#boilorder). Information is also available from local media and on the Divide County website at <http://www.dividecountynynd.org>. Residents who have questions about the return of service and status of the water quality can contact WAWSA during business hours at 701.774.6605 or can visit the WAWSA website at [www.wawsp.com](http://www.wawsp.com).

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